Celebration of Life

Audre Lorde

Gamba Adisa

Febrauary 18, 1934 - November 17, 1992

Memorial Celebration

St. George Botanical Gardens

Sunday, December 13, 1992

2:00 p.m.

Arrangements By:
Thomas Hyll Memorial Funeral Chapel

Survivors

Daughter

Elizabeth Lorde-Rollins

Son

Jonathan Rollins

Sisters

Helen Lorde Phylis Blackwell

Half-Sisters

Marjorie Jones Mabis Jones

Friend and Companion

Gloria I. Joseph

Celebration Of The Life Of Audre Lorde

Program

Welcome	Rev. Dr. Cynthia G. Young
Musicial Selection	"Kum Ba Yah" Oyoko Loving-Kangal & Audience
Musical Selection	"The Lords Prayer" Vocalist: Sule Alexander Accompanist: Ms. Leach
Eulogy	Presented by: Oyoko Loving-Kangal Written by Dr. Gloria I. Joseph
Remarks	Mary Mingus Woman's Coalition of St. Croix
Dance	"My Song For You" Dancer: Nilda Sankitts
Poetry	"Litany for Survival" by: Audre Lorde Reading by: Oyoko Loving-Kangal
Musical Selections	"Unchaned Melody" "You'll Never Walk Alone" "Praise Him" Performed by: Central High School Choir

Remarks	Dr. Cheryl Scott Nailah Okolo
Testimonial	Ika Huegel of Berlin Germany Read by: Ulla Neuberger
Dance	"Four Women" Dancer: Bonnie Brooks
Guest Speaker	Prof. Gene Emanuel University of the Virgin Islands, St. Thomas
Testimonials	Elizabeth Lorde-Rollins Jonathan Rollins Katarina Oguntoye
Statement	Alexander A. Farrelly Governor of the Virgin Islands Virdin C. Brown Senate President of the 19th Legislature US. Virgin Islands Dr. Johnnetta Cole President of Spelman College, Atlanta, Georgia Read by: Beverly Guy-Sheftall
Closing Remarks	Sonia Sanchez, Poet
Drum Solo	Chris DeMund

Refreshments Following Program

ALEXANDER A. FARRELLY
GOVERNOR

GOVERNMENT HOUSE CHARLOTTE AMALIE,
THE UNITED STATES VIRGIN ISLANDS

The Virgin Islands has suffered a great loss with the passing of Audre Lorde. We were exceedingly proud that a world renowned poet and activist was so impressed with our island lifestyle that she assumed residency and became integrally involved in the community. During her seven year residence on St. Croix, she championed the causes of women's rights, peace and freedom for all humanity.

I extend my deepest condolences to the family and friends of Audre Lorde. May her soul rest in eternal peace and her spirit remain forever in her literary works and the hearts of those whose lives she touched.

Alexander A. Farrelly

Legislature of the Virgin Islands

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VIRDIN C. BROWN
PRESIDENT

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MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE PRESIDENT

A mighty, electrified, and love filled burst of light, who at birth was named Audre Lorde, but renamed, Gamba Adisa, departed this earthly life on November 17, 1992.

The Virgin Islands, the Caribbean, and indeed the entire world, was illuminated by her poignant and altruistic writings. Now we mourn her passing. It is not often that a person with the brilliance, insight, and humble spirit possessed in the person of a Gamba Adisa touches and comes into our lives. We, here in the Virgin Islands, and St. Croix in particular, were blessed to have had the opportunity to benefit from her knowledge.

Poet, Pan-Africanist, novelist, essayist, educator, advocate, and the recipient of many prestigious awards, such as the Walt Whitman Citation of Merit, and designated State Poet for the State of New York, was the personification of a leader, a mentor, and a friend to all who knew her. It is said that the greatest of us are taken just when we are beginning to live. I am of the opinion that there may be much truth in that adage.

As President, and on behalf of the members and staff of the entire Nineteenth Legislature of the Virgin Islands, I convey my deepest sympathy to the family members, numerous loved one, and countless friends of our beloved Audre Lorde, Gamba Adisa.

Sincerely,

Virdin C. Brown

Virdin C. Brown
President
19th Legislature

Women's Coalition of St. Croix
P.O. BOX 2734 • CHRISTIANSTED • ST. CROIX • U.S.V.I. 00822
(809) 773-9272 • FAX (809) 773-9062

A TRIBUTE TO AUDRE LORDE

Gamba Adisa. Warrior. She who makes her meaning known. Audre Lorde.

We, at the Women's Coalition, are deeply saddened at the passing of such a dear friend. Audre was one of the four feminist speakers at the Women's Writers' Symposium in March, 1981. Out of this symposium the Women's Coalition was formed. From that time on, Audre became the Coalition's mentor.

In "Sister Outsider," one of her books of essays, Audre wrote,

"Certainly there are very real differences between us of race, age, and sex. But it is not those differences between us that are separating us. It is rather our refusal to recognize those differences..."

Her courage, her strength and tenacity, inspire us. For many, she became a catalyst of change.

Her poems and essays transcended race and sex barriers. Because she wrote about truth, she wrote about injustice, she wrote about prejudice and hate. But she also wrote about motherhood, love and dreams.

For fourteen years, Audre lived and came to terms with the knowledge of the cancer inside of her. She shared that personal suffering through her writings in "The Cancer Journals." Yet, at the same time, she continued her crusade against racial oppression and sexist violence. Her words were her sword.

Seven years ago, Audre made St. Croix her home. She loved St. Croix. She loved the flowers, the sea, the breezes, the people. She wanted to be here when she died. She was. Several of us at the Women's Coalition visited her before she died. She spoke of what a wonderful life she had had, how blessed she had been. She died peacefully. We, at the Coalition, are proud to have known her.

Audre lives in all of us who knew her and in all who have read any of her work or heard her speak.

In "Eye to Eye: Black Women, Hatred, and Anger," she said,

"I am who I am, doing what I came to do, acting upon you like a drug or a chisel to remind you of your me-ness, as I discover you in myself."

Thank you, Audre Lorde / Gamba Adisa, for being you.

The Women's Coalition of St. Croix

SISTERHOOD IN SUPPORT OF SISTERS IN SOUTH AFRICA

SISA

The Founding Mothers of SISA, (SISTERHOOD IN SUPPORT OF SISTERS IN SOUTH AFRICA), along with the Zamani Soweto Sisters and the Maggie Magaba Trust, two self-help organizations in South Africa, are profoundly saddened by the loss of our warrior sister, Audre Lorde. Since SISA was formed in 1984, Audre was an enthusiastic supporter of the goals of the organization, namely to link hands and resources with our South African sisters and their families and to educate people about the oppressive apartheid regime. Audre was one of our most successful fund raisers,frequently closing her public readings with a plea for funds. In many of her poems she speaks about the painful and courageous liberation struggles of the South African people.

The South African women vividly recall the joyous ocassion meeting Audre and other SISA members in Europe. The dancing, singing and community meals shared between South African and African-American sisters were exq uisitely wonderful! Such memories will be inspirational to us as we continue fulfilling the aims of SISA.

You, Audre, Gamba Adisa, were/are truly our Sister in Arms.

Lovingly,

SISA Founder: Gloria I. Joseph Gloria I Joseph

SISA Founding Mothers:

Zala Chandler

Johnnetta Cole

Andre N. McLaughlin

Barbara Riley

AUDRE LORDE

She was an African daughter, citizen of The First Cities

Was a one-woman Western Union, sending Cables to Rage

Spoke out From a Land Where Other People Live

Transacted in The New York Head Shop, curated the Museum

Knew Coal to be more precious, harder and more beautiful than diamond

Became a Black Unicorn

Knew above all Poetry Is Not a Luxury

Sang, and heard, and recognized the Undersong

Was Sister, Outsider

and Zami

Lived and danced A Burst of Light

Is now of Our Dead Behind Us, within us--

Beckoning across The Marvelous Arithmetics of Distance

For Gloria,

On the Occasion of Audre's Memorial

with my love,

Michelle Cliff

Tribute

From: Ika Huegel
Berlin Germany

And when the time came Audre said: "THAT IS THE WHOLE TRUTH", one of the first sentences that Audre Spoke in German. That is the whole truth, as true as that Audre is no more and as true as that Audre is with me forever.

So many do believe and did have a special relationship or a unique connection with Audre. I had neither, we had fun together and we often laughed about the same things. I never told her what she meant to me-that was understood, and that thought never became A burden. I never wrote a poem for her, just a few lines...in my awful English.
We laughed a lot and that was important:

And when the time came, we borrowed clothes from each other.
Audre wore my jogging suit, and she wore it everywhere. There was no place, where it would have been inappropriate...it was comfortable, that's what counted.

And when the time came, we sat down together and talked, she in German and I in English, with a dictionary between us. She loved the most difficult words, tongue-breaking words in German for "Discussion, Enthusiasm, Radiation, Passion, and Average -Size". Average-Size was the description for a fish she needed to go shopping for, because Gloria was going to arrive the next day, and Audre did not want the fish to be too large nor too small.

And when the time came, Audre talked to me about her childhood. About her first amd only sled, which she was unable to steer. She collided with a tree and broke her foot. We talked about everything, about important matters and seemingly unimportant ones.

And when the time came, and Audre became tired and anxious more frequently, we practiced imagery together. We were going to jog in the morning, and it didn't matter whether we really did go jogging. The energy did not came from the action of jogging, but from the idea of it. We felt very athletic.

And when the time came when there was more and more pain, and more pain, and Audre woke Dagmar and me in the middle of the night to hold our hand, feeling bad about having interrupted our sleep. I promised her long nights and she knew, that I would be by her side every night. All the way to the last night, when she died.

I loved her for her laughter as much as for her struggle. In the end it was important to her to receive and for once not to give.

Yes, she was like nobody else, she was unique, like we all are...As she said so often, and as she would say today.

ALL YOU HAD TO DO

© by Winnie "Oyoko" Loving

Audre
Audre

Audre

All you had to do was
Simply smile
And our dreams unfolded
Gloriously
Our fears faded in/to your gaze
And we reveled in your wisdom
Healed, happy, whole.

All you had to do was
Speak our names
And pain melted to poetry
Wondrously
Our feelings emerged, accepted
And you lovingly heard them all
Softly, searching, sweet.

All you had to do was
Hold us near
And stars blinked golden amber
Reverently
You touched the chords within us
Gently beckoning our unspoken awe
We trembled, we marveled, we loved you.

Lorde

Lorde

Lorde.

Love ♡
Oyoko
Nov 19, 1992

To Ms. Lorde,

One of the most beautiful persons I have ever come across in my life. She loved all people. She was also a very smart lady. I met Ms. Lorde just a few weeks ago, but it was as though we had met in some place another life. I wish we had more time together. I hope and pray that we will meet each other on the other side. I loved her. We all loved her, but God loves her best.

So long my dear friend, sleep on and take your rest.

Love

Maexxxxxx

(Arrimintha A. Mondesire was one of the nurses who attended Audre during the final weeks of her life.)

The members of the Cross-Cultural Initiative of Black Women in Germany (IISF e.v.) were deeply moved to receive the notice of the passing of our beloved sister Audre Lorde.

Audre Lorde's literary works, her worldwide activities for the rights of oppressed people, in particular Black Woman in the diaspora, her concern with the various struggles for human rights justice and dignity have left a deep impression on the small community of Black people in Germany.

In Germany Audre Lorde taught American Literature and creative writing. Here she inspired the publication of the book Farbe Bekennen "Showing Our Colors", and through her own initiative became part of the international network of Black women, enabling us to host the International Cross-Cultural Black Women's Studies Summer Institute in Germany in 1991. She taught us and others, women and men, young and old, people of different backgrounds and identities to look at our differences as an empowering force to better understand ourselves and each other.

Personally and politically, Audre Lorde has a special relationship in Germany, where she had numerous friends. She was shocked by the recent political development in Germany and the new wave of racial violence against migrants, foreigners, asylum seekers and Black People. Only weeks before her death, she and Dr. Gloria Joseph published articles in several German Newspapers, warning against racism and hate.

Many of us knew her personally, many of us mourn the loss of a a real friend, and Sister in Arms. Her work and her memory will stay alive, and we shall continue our various struggles in her Spirit.

Marion Kraft
Cross-Cultural Iniative
of Black Women in Germany
(IISF. e.v.)

Poet, novelist, essayist, educator and activist, Audre Lorde often introducing herself as Black, Feminist, Poet, Mother, Warrior, Woman, in a recent African naming ceremony on St. Croix, Audre Lorde was given the African name Gamba Adisa - Warrior: She who Makes her Meaning Known. A writer of enormous power and stature, Audre Lorde was an influential and inspiring leader. From 1968, when her first book of poetry CABLES TO RAGE was published to her forthcoming THE MARVELOUS ARITHMATICS OF DISTANCE, she published ten volumes of poetry, including: CABLES TO RAGE, FROM A LAND WHERE OTHER PEOPLE LIVE, NEW YORK HEAD SHOP AND MUSEUM, COAL, BETWEEN OURSELVES, THE BLACK UNICORN, OUR DEAD BEHIND US, and most recently UNDERSONG: CHOSEN POEMS OLD AND NEW (W.W. Norton). Her novel, which she called a biomythology ZAMI, A NEW SPELLING OF MY NAME, and her generative essays on cancer, race, love and hate, war and peace, art and passion (THE CANCER JOURNALS, BURST OF LIGHT, AND SISTER OUTSIDER), have been widely reprinted and translated- most notably: " Poetry Is Not a Luxury," "Uses of the Erotic, The Erotic As Power," "Apartheid USA," "A Litany for Survival," " The Uses of Anger: Women Responding to Racism," and "I Am Your Sister: Black women Organizing Across Sexualities."

Her mother Linda Belmar was from Carlacou, Grenada, and her father Fredrick Byron Lorde from Barbados. A graduate of Hunter College and Columbia University School of Library Science. Audre Lorde was Professor of English and held the Thomas Hunter Chair at Hunter College; she also lectured widely throughout the United States, Europe, Africa, Australia and New Zealand and taught frequently in Berlin (where she received alternative cancer theraples for over eight years). She served on many literary and editorial boards, and was active in many political organizations. She was a founding member of Kitchen Table. Women of Color Press; and SISA- Sisterhood in Support of Sisters in South Africa, and organization that sends financial support to women's self-help groups in South Africa, and maintains ongoing connections between the women of South Africa and the members of SISA in the US and Europe.

She was the recipient of many honors and awards, including and honorary Doctorate of Literature, University of Osnabrueck, Germany(1992); and honorary Doctorate of Literature, Hunter College(1991); Honorary Doctorate of Letters, Oberlin College(1990); Honorary Doctorate of Humane Letters, Haverford College(1989); a worldwide celebration and tribute I AM YOUR SISTER CONFERENCE: FORGING GLOBAL CONNECTIONS ACROSS DIFFERENCES (October 1990); the Manhattan Borough President's Award for Excellence in the Arts (1988); and most recently the Walt Whitman Citation of Merit, naming her New York State Poet for 1991-1993.

On 12 November 1991, when Governor Mario Cuomo named Audre Lorde New York State Poet he said:

"Audre Lorde is a voice of eloquent courage and unflinching honesty. She grew up speaking up with voice of a poet- passionate, always, about telling the truth and sharing her triumphs and her pain with her loved ones, her community and the world.

"She has never outgrown the passion as she has sung her songs of joy and anger, of desire and loss. She writes about love and suffering in vividly honest and penetrating language but with artful dramatic dexterity.

"There is no can't no idle conjuring in Audre Lorde's work: She allows herself to be known fully. Her imagination is charged by a sharp sense of racial injustice and cruelty, of sexual prejudice. She cries out aginst it as the voice of indignant humanity.

"She is candid, even bold about the hard truth as she has witnessed and lived it. But she has not missed the sweetness either. She sings, too, of the loved and sisterhood among women and of the tenderness that accompanies the tension between parents and children and mothers and daughters.

"Audre Lorde is the voice of the eloquent outsider who speaks in a language that can reach and touch people everywhere - outside and in.

"It has been said of Audre Lorde that she is like the black unicorn of which she writes: a magical and mysterious bearer of fantasy draped in truth and beauty.

"Audre Lorde is a poet fo courage and pride, of hard-edged anger, and of indomitable hope, for light and change. We honor her today with the pride of knowing that she is our sister and our true neighbor.

"NOW THEREFORE I, MARIO M. CUOMO, Governor of the State of New York, do hereby award this Walt Whitman Citation of Merit for Poets to

AUDRE LORDE

and designate her State Poet for the State of New York for the years 1991-1993.

Celebration Of The Life Of Audre Lorde

Dear Family and Friends of our late beloved sister Audre Lorde, mentor and kindly soul,...Welcome, welcome, welcome. To those of you who have travelled great distances, and to those of you who live near, I say welcome, welcome...Welcome to join in the "Celebration of the Life of the "Goddess, Gamba Adisa".

Her painful physical sojourn is over. She now resides in the city of true Light and Life.

As I was flying to Harrisburg, Pa. a few days ago, I was overwhelmed by recurring thoughts of this indescribably multifaceted soul, and for some moments, I saw visions of her smiling face lit up by the crystalline brilliance of the Sun and, in silent communication I heard her say, "I have traversed for three days, the tunnel of darkness and now, ...I am Light...all my loved ones who preceded me were waiting to welcome and assist me into the Elysian field where the color of the flowers is that of pure iridescence, the fragrance of which is intoxicating, the grass is intensely green and the wind is so soft and so gentle...Is this the freedom we so desperately seek? These souls are helping me make the adjustment from a physical body into that of a spiritual being. Whenl have succeeded I shall be taken to the planet Venus where healing and love abound.

After this process is complete, I shall be with many of you. From time to time, you will feel, sense or hear from me, words of comfort...from time to time, you will receive from me impressions that are applicable to the difficult situations you shall experience. Simply think of me and I will be there.

My work has just begun.

The stone hearts of those who survive on injustice will cease to be in the coming round.

To fight for the ideas in which one firmly believes is most honorable.

To suffer is an indication of the growth of the soul.

To love is to be lovely.

If only we could see things as they really are!!!

Peace, Love, Light to all...

..The Goddess Gamba Adisa

Rev. Cynthia G. Young Ph.D, Msc

Credits

Reb. Dr. Cynthia G. Young Winnie Oyoko Loving-Kangal	Program Coordinators
Gloria J. Joseph Ada Griffin	Concept
Christine Moodie Ulla Neuberger	Refreshments Committee
Yemaya Jones	Decorations
Leo Carty	Art Work
Dagmar Schultz	Photograph
Ika Huegel	Graphics
Howard Francis Curtis Sandy	Set-Up
Jimmie C. Griffin	Thomas/Hyll Funeral Chapel

The Family and Friends of Audre Lorde extend their Sincere Thanks to all who have contributed their energies and time to the Celebration.

In the Hand of Afrekete

The St. Croix community was truly home for Audre Lorde, our Gamba Adisa. The international acclaim, honorary degrees, literary prizes and awards that she received were well deserved. However, it was in St. Croix that her West Indian roots flourished, and she was able to enjoy life in a way that she yearned.

She loved warm/hot weather, bright sunshine, calm and roaring seas, tropical plants, and had a keen interest in rocks, birds and insect life. St. Croix provided her with all of this and much more. Audre, warm-hearted and dignified was always ready to lend a helping hand or offer words of advice, inspiration and encouragement. She was splendid in her African styled clothing and her dread locks. When she lost them she was equally as splendid with her baldness. She loved life and lived it to the hilt while dying.

The love and appreciation she held for the St. Croix community has come back ten-fold in the outpouring of expressions of love gratitude, appreciation and respect.

I know there are many individuals that Audre would like to express her gratitude for their deep concern for her welfare and for enriching the quality of her life. She would also like to include the American Airlines staff and the Sion Farm Clinical Lab., Inc. for their exceptionally caring services; The Women's Coalition of St. Croix; her bee collective, -Gloria, Curtis, Howard and Sadiq; The Pan African Support Members; Ulla and Amina with their bookstores; and the "All My Children" addicts! Yes, she was an "All My Children's" fan as well as New York State poet laureate. The sublime to the ridiculous!

Such was the scape of Gamba Adisa. Her spirit will remain with us, but I, her beloved friend, true comrade and sister in arms, will miss her presence dearly.

Dr. Gloria I. Joseph

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And when the time came, we borrowed clothes from each other.
Audre wore my jogging suit, and she wore it everywhere. There was no place, where it would have been inappropriate...it was comfortable, that's what counted.

And when the time came, we sat down together and talked, she in German and I in English, with a dictionary between us. She loved the most difficult words, tongue-breaking words in German for "Discussion, Enthusiasm, Radiation, Passion, and Average -Size". Average-Size was the description for a fish she needed to go shopping for, because Gloria was going to arrive the next day, and Audre did not want the fish to be too large nor too small.

And when the time came, Audre talked to me about her childhood. About her first amd only sled, which she was unable to steer. She collided with a tree and broke her foot. We talked about everything, about important matters and seemingly unimportant ones.

And when the time came, and Audre became tired and anxious more frequently, we practiced imagery together. We were going to jog in the morning, and it didn't matter whether we really did go jogging. The energy did not came from the action of jogging, but from the idea of it. We felt very athletic.

And when the time came when there was more and more pain, and more pain, and Audre woke Dagmar and me in the middle of the night to hold our hand, feeling bad about having interrupted our sleep. I promised her long nights and she knew, that I would be by her side every night. All the way to the last night, when she died.

I loved her for her laughter as much as for her struggle. In the end it was important to her to receive and for once not to give.

Yes, she was like nobody else, she was unique, like we all are...As she said so often, and as she would say today.

ALL YOU HAD TO DO

© by Winnie "Oyoko" Loving

Audre
Audre

Audre

All you had to do was
Simply smile
And our dreams unfolded
Gloriously
Our fears faded in/to your gaze
And we reveled in your wisdom
Healed, happy, whole.

All you had to do was
Speak our names
And pain melted to poetry
Wondrously
Our feelings emerged, accepted
And you lovingly heard them all
Softly, searching, sweet.

All you had to do was
Hold us near
And stars blinked golden amber
Reverently
You touched the chords within us
Gently beckoning our unspoken awe
We trembled, we marveled, we loved you.

Lorde

Lorde

Lorde.

Love ♡
Oyoko
Nov 19, 1992

To Ms. Lorde,

One of the most beautiful persons I have ever come across in my life. She loved all people. She was also a very smart lady. I met Ms. Lorde just a few weeks ago, but it was as though we had met in some place another life. I wish we had more time together. I hope and pray that we will meet each other on the other side. I loved her. We all loved her, but God loves her best.

So long my dear friend, sleep on and take your rest.

Love

Maexxxxxx

(Arrimintha A. Mondesire was one of the nurses who attended Audre during the final weeks of her life.)

The members of the Cross-Cultural Initiative of Black Women in Germany (IISF e.v.) were deeply moved to receive the notice of the passing of our beloved sister Audre Lorde.

Audre Lorde's literary works, her worldwide activities for the rights of oppressed people, in particular Black Woman in the diaspora, her concern with the various struggles for human rights justice and dignity have left a deep impression on the small community of Black people in Germany.

In Germany Audre Lorde taught American Literature and creative writing. Here she inspired the publication of the book Farbe Bekennen "Showing Our Colors", and through her own initiative became part of the international network of Black women, enabling us to host the International Cross-Cultural Black Women's Studies Summer Institute in Germany in 1991. She taught us and others, women and men, young and old, people of different backgrounds and identities to look at our differences as an empowering force to better understand ourselves and each other.

Personally and politically, Audre Lorde has a special relationship in Germany, where she had numerous friends. She was shocked by the recent political development in Germany and the new wave of racial violence against migrants, foreigners, asylum seekers and Black People. Only weeks before her death, she and Dr. Gloria Joseph published articles in several German Newspapers, warning against racism and hate.

Many of us knew her personally, many of us mourn the loss of a a real friend, and Sister in Arms. Her work and her memory will stay alive, and we shall continue our various struggles in her Spirit.

Marion Kraft
Cross-Cultural Iniative
of Black Women in Germany
(IISF. e.v.)

Poet, novelist, essayist, educator and activist, Audre Lorde often introducing herself as Black, Feminist, Poet, Mother, Warrior, Woman, in a recent African naming ceremony on St. Croix, Audre Lorde was given the African name Gamba Adisa - Warrior: She who Makes her Meaning Known. A writer of enormous power and stature, Audre Lorde was an influential and inspiring leader. From 1968, when her first book of poetry CABLES TO RAGE was published to her forthcoming THE MARVELOUS ARITHMATICS OF DISTANCE, she published ten volumes of poetry, including: CABLES TO RAGE, FROM A LAND WHERE OTHER PEOPLE LIVE, NEW YORK HEAD SHOP AND MUSEUM, COAL, BETWEEN OURSELVES, THE BLACK UNICORN, OUR DEAD BEHIND US, and most recently UNDERSONG: CHOSEN POEMS OLD AND NEW (W.W. Norton). Her novel, which she called a biomythology ZAMI, A NEW SPELLING OF MY NAME, and her generative essays on cancer, race, love and hate, war and peace, art and passion (THE CANCER JOURNALS, BURST OF LIGHT, AND SISTER OUTSIDER), have been widely reprinted and translated- most notably: " Poetry Is Not a Luxury," "Uses of the Erotic, The Erotic As Power," "Apartheid USA," "A Litany for Survival," " The Uses of Anger: Women Responding to Racism," and "I Am Your Sister: Black women Organizing Across Sexualities."

Her mother Linda Belmar was from Carlacou, Grenada, and her father Fredrick Byron Lorde from Barbados. A graduate of Hunter College and Columbia University School of Library Science. Audre Lorde was Professor of English and held the Thomas Hunter Chair at Hunter College; she also lectured widely throughout the United States, Europe, Africa, Australia and New Zealand and taught frequently in Berlin (where she received alternative cancer theraples for over eight years). She served on many literary and editorial boards, and was active in many political organizations. She was a founding member of Kitchen Table. Women of Color Press; and SISA- Sisterhood in Support of Sisters in South Africa, and organization that sends financial support to women's self-help groups in South Africa, and maintains ongoing connections between the women of South Africa and the members of SISA in the US and Europe.

She was the recipient of many honors and awards, including and honorary Doctorate of Literature, University of Osnabrueck, Germany(1992); and honorary Doctorate of Literature, Hunter College(1991); Honorary Doctorate of Letters, Oberlin College(1990); Honorary Doctorate of Humane Letters, Haverford College(1989); a worldwide celebration and tribute I AM YOUR SISTER CONFERENCE: FORGING GLOBAL CONNECTIONS ACROSS DIFFERENCES (October 1990); the Manhattan Borough President's Award for Excellence in the Arts (1988); and most recently the Walt Whitman Citation of Merit, naming her New York State Poet for 1991-1993.

On 12 November 1991, when Governor Mario Cuomo named Audre Lorde New York State Poet he said:

"Audre Lorde is a voice of eloquent courage and unflinching honesty. She grew up speaking up with voice of a poet- passionate, always, about telling the truth and sharing her triumphs and her pain with her loved ones, her community and the world.

"She has never outgrown the passion as she has sung her songs of joy and anger, of desire and loss. She writes about love and suffering in vividly honest and penetrating language but with artful dramatic dexterity.

"There is no can't no idle conjuring in Audre Lorde's work: She allows herself to be known fully. Her imagination is charged by a sharp sense of racial injustice and cruelty, of sexual prejudice. She cries out aginst it as the voice of indignant humanity.

"She is candid, even bold about the hard truth as she has witnessed and lived it. But she has not missed the sweetness either. She sings, too, of the loved and sisterhood among women and of the tenderness that accompanies the tension between parents and children and mothers and daughters.

"Audre Lorde is the voice of the eloquent outsider who speaks in a language that can reach and touch people everywhere - outside and in.

"It has been said of Audre Lorde that she is like the black unicorn of which she writes: a magical and mysterious bearer of fantasy draped in truth and beauty.

"Audre Lorde is a poet fo courage and pride, of hard-edged anger, and of indomitable hope, for light and change. We honor her today with the pride of knowing that she is our sister and our true neighbor.

"NOW THEREFORE I, MARIO M. CUOMO, Governor of the State of New York, do hereby award this Walt Whitman Citation of Merit for Poets to

AUDRE LORDE

and designate her State Poet for the State of New York for the years 1991-1993.

Celebration Of The Life Of Audre Lorde

Dear Family and Friends of our late beloved sister Audre Lorde, mentor and kindly soul,...Welcome, welcome, welcome. To those of you who have travelled great distances, and to those of you who live near, I say welcome, welcome...Welcome to join in the "Celebration of the Life of the "Goddess, Gamba Adisa".

Her painful physical sojourn is over. She now resides in the city of true Light and Life.

As I was flying to Harrisburg, Pa. a few days ago, I was overwhelmed by recurring thoughts of this indescribably multifaceted soul, and for some moments, I saw visions of her smiling face lit up by the crystalline brilliance of the Sun and, in silent communication I heard her say, "I have traversed for three days, the tunnel of darkness and now, ...I am Light...all my loved ones who preceded me were waiting to welcome and assist me into the Elysian field where the color of the flowers is that of pure iridescence, the fragrance of which is intoxicating, the grass is intensely green and the wind is so soft and so gentle...Is this the freedom we so desperately seek? These souls are helping me make the adjustment from a physical body into that of a spiritual being. When I have succeeded I shall be taken to the planet Venus where healing and love abound.

After this process is complete, I shall be with many of you. From time to time, you will feel, sense or hear from me, words of comfort...from time to time, you will receive from me impressions that are applicable to the difficult situations you shall experience. Simply think of me and I will be there.

My work has just begun.

The stone hearts of those who survive on injustice will cease to be in the coming round.

To fight for the ideas in which one firmly believes is most honorable.

To suffer is an indication of the growth of the soul.

To love is to be lovely.

If only we could see things as they really are!!!

Peace, Love, Light to all...

..The Goddess Gamba Adisa

Rev. Cynthia G. Young Ph.D, Msc

AUDRE LORDE

She was an African daughter, citizen of The First Cities

Was a one-woman Western Union, sending Cables to Rage

Spoke out From a Land Where Other People Live

Transacted in The New York Head Shop, curated the Museum

Knew Coal to be more precious, harder and more beautiful than diamond

Became a Black Unicorn

Knew above all Poetry is Not a Luxury

Sang, and heard, and recognized the Undersong

Was Sister, Outsider

and Zami

Lived and danced A Burst of Light

Is now of Our Dead Behind Us, within us--

Beckoning across The Marvelous Arithmetics of Distance

For Gloria,

On the Occasion of Audre's Memorial

with my love,

Michelle Cliff

Credits

Reb. Dr. Cynthia G. Young Winnie Oyoko Loving-Kangal	Program Coordinators
Gloria J. Joseph Ada Griffin	Concept
Christine Moodie Ulla Neuberger	Refreshments Committee
Yemaya Jones	Decorations
Leo Carty	Art Work
Dagmar Schultz	Photograph
Ika Huegel	Graphics
Howard Francis Curtis Sandy	Set-Up
Jimmie C. Griffin	Thomas/Hyll Funeral Chapel

The Family and Friends of Audre Lorde extend their Sincere Thanks to all who have contributed their energies and time to the Celebration.

In the Hand of Afrekete

The St. Croix community was truly home for Audre Lorde, our Gamba Adisa. The international acclaim, honorary degrees, literary prizes and awards that she received were well deserved. However, it was in St. Croix that her West Indian roots flourished, and she was able to enjoy life in a way that she yearned.

She loved warm/hot weather, bright sunshine, calm and roaring seas, tropical plants, and had a keen interest in rocks, birds and insect life. St. Croix provided her with all of this and much more. Audre, warm-hearted and dignified was always ready to lend a helping hand or offer words of advice, inspiration and encouragement. She was splendid in her African styled clothing and her dread locks. When she lost them she was equally as splendid with her baldness. She loved life and lived it to the hilt while dying.

The love and appreciation she held for the St. Croix community has come back ten-fold in the outpouring of expressions of love gratitude, appreciation and respect.

I know there are many individuals that Audre would like to express her gratitude for their deep concern for her welfare and for enriching the quality of her life. She would also like to include the American Airlines staff and the Sion Farm Clinical Lab., Inc. for their exceptionally caring services; The Women's Coalition of St. Croix; her bee collective, -Gloria, Curtis, Howard and Sadiq; The Pan African Support Members; Ulla and Amina with their bookstores; and the "All My Children" addicts! Yes, she was an "All My Children's" fan as well as New York State poet laureate. The sublime to the ridiculous!

Such was the scape of Gamba Adisa. Her spirit will remain with us, but I, her beloved friend, true comrade and sister in arms, will miss her presence dearly.

Dr. Gloria I. Joseph

Gloria I. Joseph